



Board- Director Partnerships

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Welcome & Introductions

[Photo used courtesy of Belinda Fewings](#)



A photograph of a woman with blonde hair, wearing a white blouse with a black and gold pattern, sitting at a wooden table. She is gesturing with her right hand, palm up. In the foreground, another person's hands are visible, holding a pen. The background is slightly blurred, showing a meeting or workshop setting. A dark, semi-transparent triangular overlay covers the right side of the image, and a dark, semi-transparent rectangular overlay covers the bottom left corner.

Library Boards: An Essential Group

[Photo used courtesy of Amy Hirschi](#)

Roles and responsibilities: a short quiz



WHOSE JOB IS IT? A TEST FOR LIBRARY TRUSTEES

Please answer the following questions with "T" for Trustee or "L" for Librarian.

- ___ 1. Who selects and orders the books and other materials for the library?
- ___ 2. Who prepares the budget for the library?
- ___ 3. Who recruits new board members?
- ___ 4. Who approves the policies of the library?
- ___ 5. Who keeps up with local and state laws relating to libraries?

Types of library relationships



Governing boards



Advisory boards



Libraries with no boards



Unique issues for Library District Boards



Unique issues of Non-profit boards




Being the Best Board Member Possible

Supporting the Library

1. Can you name 3 reasons why legislators, parents, and residents should support your library? (Have you heard the term, “elevator speech”?)
2. What do you read or listen to regularly to keep informed about library issues?
3. How do you stay aware of city, county, and state news and issues to see how they relate to the library?

(Questions originally accompanied a video from the Wyoming State Library)




Being the Best Board Member Possible

Getting New Trustees Up and Running

1. Does your library have a formal, written orientation process for new board members?
2. How could your board make things easier for new trustees?
3. Has every board member been through a structured orientation process?
4. How often does the board review policies on relating to the library director and library employees?

(Questions originally accompanied a video from the Wyoming State Library)




Being the Best Board Member Possible

Making the Most of Board Meetings

1. Why is it important to read the materials provided to you before the board meeting?
2. Are you familiar with Robert's Rules of Order?
3. Why should the chair be the spokesperson for the library board?
4. Why is it best for the board to speak as one on all issues?
5. How can the board best handle differences of opinion among board members?

(Questions originally accompanied a video from the Wyoming State Library)




Being the Best Board Member Possible

Board and Director Responsibilities

1. What policies is the board responsible for?
2. What is the library director responsible for?
3. What are the goals set by the board for the library director?
4. How current are the library's policies? Are they in written form and available to library employees, patrons, city council members, county commissioners, and trustees?

(Questions originally accompanied a video from the Wyoming State Library)




Being the Best Board Member Possible

Financial Responsibilities

1. Is the board involved in budget development?
2. Who signs the checks?
3. Does your library have an annual audit?

(Questions originally accompanied a video from the Wyoming State Library)




Being the Best Board Member Possible

Policy Responsibilities

1. How often should policies be reviewed?
2. What are the policies on board conduct?
3. What resources do you have for policy development?

(Questions originally accompanied a video from the Wyoming State Library)




Being the Best Board Member Possible

Planning Responsibilities

1. Why is it important to know the vision and plans of other community groups when thinking about the library's strategic plan?
2. Have you considered plans for technology, facilities, employees, and marketing?
3. How current is your library's strategic (or long-range) plan? What are the goals and how often do you revise it?

(Questions originally accompanied a video from the Wyoming State Library)



Being the Best Board Member Possible

Advocacy

1. Why should board members (and not just the director) advocate for the library?
2. In what ways can you advocate for the library besides asking for money?
3. What are 3 important messages about your library that you can use when advocating for the library?

(Questions originally accompanied a video from the Wyoming State Library)



Being the Best Board Member Possible

Friends and Foundations

1. Does your library have both a Friends group & a Foundation? Are both of them 501 c 3s?
2. What are the purposes of the 2 groups?
3. Does the board have a good relationship with these groups?
4. Can you articulate why these groups should be separate from the library board?

(Questions originally accompanied a video from the Wyoming State Library)

Golden rules for library board members

Leave the actual management of the library to your library director.

Stand behind board decisions once they are adopted.

Be very careful to keep confidential information confidential.

Golden rules for library board members

Respect the publicity and advertising policy set up by the entire board as to source of news items.

Treat the staff members and the library director in a completely impersonal fashion.

Never, under any circumstance, hire a relative in any capacity as a library employee.

Golden rules for library board members

Recommendations to the library director or staff members must always emanate from at least a quorum of the board at a regular meeting.

Do not hold board meetings without the library director.

Complaints from the public are first the responsibility of the library director.

Golden rules for library board members

Carry your full share of responsibility as a board member.

The library director or his/her designated staff member should be the only person authorized to give orders to book vendors, companies, etc.

It is a library board prerogative to spend money, not save it.

Other types of boards connected to the library



Friends



Foundation boards

Helpful Documents

- Public Library Advisory Board Handbook
<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ld/pubs/plant/index.html>
- State legislation: Open Meetings Act, Open Records, audits, Public Funds Investment
- TSLAC requirements of all libraries: Annual Report, ILL, budgetary requirements

Wrap-up and questions



[Photo used courtesy of Jon Tyson](#)